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# Businesses must plan for climate change

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**UK businesses need to be ready to face the risks and benefit from the opportunities that climate change could bring, Environment Secretary Caroline Spelman has announced.**

A flooded street in Sheffield in 2007

Speaking while meeting leading climate scientists at the Met Office, the Environment Secretary said: “We know that some level of change is now unavoidable and it is the responsibility of us all to think about what a changing climate will mean for our health, our businesses and our way of life. By planning for the adaptation we need now we can ensure that the UK is best placed to meet the challenges of climate change head-on.

“A warmer climate will bring both opportunities and challenges for businesses of all sizes. I want to ensure that UK businesses are well placed to take advantage of the new opportunities that arise as well as ensuring they are ready for the difficulties that higher temperatures and more adverse weather could mean for their staff and working practices.”

A new survey of UK businesses and other organisations, carried out for Defra by Ipsos MORI, found that while many businesses have been affected by the type of weather that climate change may bring, preparations for the impacts of climate change are not well advanced.

Three quarters of the businesses surveyed were concerned about the effects of climate change on the UK and one in three (31%) had been significantly affected in the last three years by extreme weather such as flooding and drought. However, less than a quarter (23%) had actually started to do something about the risks and opportunities that climate change poses.

The survey also shows that businesses generally perceive a changing climate to be a threat rather than an opportunity. However recent research has shown that the impacts of climate change will present opportunities for UK businesses across a range of sectors such as construction and retro-fitting, water management, tourism, transport and food production.

Julia Slingo, Chief Scientist of the Met Office said: “We were delighted the Secretary of State chose to visit the Met Office to highlight the need for business to plan for climate change and hear about the important work we do.

The Met Office occupies a unique position in being able to advise both the Government and business on the risks associated with hazardous weather in the short term, and the threats, and indeed opportunities, over the coming decades as our climate changes.”

**Climate change and businesses**

**The effects of climate change on our world**

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